port of the coastal Ivory Coast population. There was little they could do about it, however, because 'the decision of the Mogho Naba was irrevocable.' "[4]

The election was hotly contested. The candidates based their campaigns on local issues: taxes, forced labor, the lack of public services, the status of the traditional chiefs, colonialism, racial discrimination, and so on. The Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), led by Houphouët-Boigny, stressed the need for combating racial discrimination and exploitation by European planters. The Union pour la Défense des Interêts de la Haute-Volta (UDIHV), formed by the Mogho Naba and a group of mission-educated young men and led by the Baloum Naba, stressed the need to end forced labor, especially among the Mossi, and to place all the Mossi under one territorial government. The UDIHV realized that it had little chance of gaining votes in the south, and therefore concentrated its efforts in the north. However, no credence is to be given to the story that "Whenever [the Baloum Naba] was free from [official] supervision, he told the people, 'Vote for my friend Houphouët. . . . What would I do in Paris, with my forty wives and at my age? I can't speak a blasted word of French.' "[5] Houphouët-Boigny won the election by the surprisingly narrow margin of 12,650 to 11,620.[6]

Houphouët-Boigny played a leading role in persuading the first Constituent Assembly to submit to the voters a number of important liberal colonial reforms. These included the abolition of the Indigénat; the freedom of meeting and association; the bestowal of French citizenship on colonial peoples without affecting their traditional personal status; the use of the French Penal Code in all courts dealing with criminal cases; and the abolition of forced labor.[7]

There was some discussion in the Assembly of what role the traditional chiefs should play in the projected political structure of Overseas France. One group of delegates held that "the structure of the local Assemblies should be tied intimately to the existing structure of the overseas societies. Otherwise, they would be bogus Assemblies whose decisions would serve the interests of only one class in the society, the dominant class."[8] These men felt that while many chiefs were conservatives and might incline to "neo-feudalism," the new elite of young educated Africans who aspired to replace the Europeans were, for the most part, European-trained and out of contact with the rural masses. These delegates believed that only the chiefs could provide adequate popular leadership, and that the French Union could not cohere or develop unless the chiefs had some status vis-à-vis the elite and prestige in the eyes of the people.[9]

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Another group held that the chiefs need not be formally associated with the governmental apparatus. A historical precedent was cited: in the early days of colonialism, the chiefs had not become civil servants, and their status had not been impaired. Thus, when a chief collected taxes for the administration, his action was comparable to his former collection of tribute; when he recruited forced labor for the administration and the large plantations, it was similar to the traditional corvée; and when he asked people to plant certain crops, it was like asking them to cultivate his own fields. In a word, as the institution of chieftainship had adjusted to past changes in African societies, so it had the capacity to adjust in the future.[10]

Other delegates, and apparently the French administrators as well, felt that the chiefs should be associated with the administration, but as administrative assistants and not as elected representatives of the masses.[11] Since the position of the chiefs was sacred as well as secular, it was argued, political defeat might impair their position as "the fathers of their people."[12]

The constitution drafted by the first Constituent Assembly (lacking any provisions concerning the traditional chiefs) was finally submitted to the voters in May 1946. Although it won a majority of overseas votes, it was defeated by the French people. The subsequently convened second Constituent Assembly was subjected to a great deal of pressure by a group of colonialists called Etats Généraux de Colonisation, and as a result many of the provisions of the first constitution, among them the single-college provision and various rights of citizenship, were not included in the second. The revised constitution was accepted by the French voters in October 1946.[13] By this time, however, many of the African delegates had become so disillusioned with the French parliamentarians in the National Assembly that they decided to fend for themselves. They met in Bamako in the French Sudan and formed an inter-territorial grouping called the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), led by Houphouët-Boigny. Houphouët-Boigny was strongly anti-imperialist, and the party received the active support of the French Communists. It adopted a violently anti-colonial platform, pledging to rally the peoples of Africa to a world-wide struggle against colonial imperialism, and to try to bring all of the emerging political parties in French Africa under its banner in order to achieve the "emancipation of the African masses."[14]

The Mogho Naba and the other Mossi chiefs, noting the anti-colonial posture of the RDA and the hostile reaction of the colonial regime to this group, attempted to take advantage of the situation by advocating the reintegration of the Upper Volta under their more conservative auspices. The Mogho Naba had already taken advantage of the Bastille Day celebration

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in 1946 to visit and consult with the Yatenga Naba about Mossi reunification, thus ending a centuries-old tradition whereby the two rulers could not meet for fear of death inflicted by the ancestors. Their project was now received with greater interest by the local Europeans, both *colons* and administrators, who were alarmed by Houphouët-Boigny's radicalism and bent on preventing the spread of virulent anti-colonialism among the well-disciplined Voltaic populations.

Shortly after the constitution was approved, the administration announced that elections would be held on December 15 for the Second College of the Ivory Coast's General Council or Territorial Assembly (to be composed of Africans and persons without full French citizenship) and for the other organs of the French Union. Once again Houphouët-Boigny and the RDA, having gained the support of the PDCI and the Parti Progressiste de la Côte d'Ivoire (PPCI), tried to obtain the backing of the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou and the Mossi-supported UDIHV (shortly to become the Union Voltaïque).[15] Again the Mogho Naba refused. Gabriel D'Arboussier, one of Houphouët-Boigny's lieutenants and an important official of the RDA, later charged that the ruler had been influenced by the Minister of Overseas France, Coste-Floret, who told him that the RDA "was no more democratic than it was African, that it was not an Assembly, and that Africans should rally to an institution that was truly African."[16] In any event, the Mogho Naba and the UDIHV decided to oppose the RDA. They emphasized the common interests of the Upper Volta and championed Voltaic candidates, Mossi and non-Mossi alike.

The electoral law of the territories promulgated in October 1946 did not specifically discriminate against the chiefs, but it was heavily weighted in favor of the educated and urban elite. The electorate was confined to civil servants; soldiers and veterans of the armed forces; chiefs; permanent employees of commercial, industrial, craft, or agricultural establishments; members and former members, for at least two years, of cooperatives, trade unions, and committees of provident societies; holders of official decorations; members of prewar courts and councils including the Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture, and Industry, and agricultural unions; Christian priests and ministers; owners of registered real property; holders of driving or shooting licenses; and persons literate in French or Arabic. Candidates for election to the Territorial Assemblies had to be at least twenty-three years of age, to be registered on the electoral list as residents of the territory, to have a good knowledge of French, and to post a bond of 5,000 CFA (Colonies Françaises d'Afrique) francs, which was forfeited if the candidate received less than 5 per cent of the votes in his election district. Many chiefs were eligible to vote, but, because their fathers had opposed their be-

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ing educated at mission-sponsored schools, few were qualified to run for office.[17]

More serious for the position of the Mossi chiefs, perhaps, was the fact that many of them either were ill informed about the election or refused to take it seriously. Balima states that a surprisingly large number of Mossi chiefs "could not understand very well the importance of this novelty—which is understandable; had no interest in the formalities, which they nevertheless carried out; and somewhat haphazardly designated as candidates African civil servants to whom they were not even tied by close bonds of friendship."[18] Of course, another reason for this choice of "African civil servants" was that they were among the only persons with the training and education required for candidacy. Nevertheless, the candidates included a few educated members of chiefly families—persons who, not being in the main line of descent or being otherwise ineligible for office in the traditional system, had been "given" to the Europeans to be educated.

The partisans of the Mossi chiefs were victorious in the northern part of the Ivory Coast in an election that saw the emergence of such Voltaic politicians of later fame as Blaise Benon, François Bouda, Zinda Kaboré, Christophe Kalenzaga, Tindougou Ouédraogo, Zebango Pohi, and Maurice Yaméogo. However, the Second College was dominated by Houphouët-Boigny and his RDA colleagues. Despite the Mogho Naba's opposition, RDA delegates set out to ameliorate conditions in the Volta region. For example, the RDA secured the passage of bills to raise the Mogho Naba's salary from 60,000 francs a year, a trifling sum in view of his official and private expenses, to about 500,000 francs a year. Similarly, it ensured that Mossi and other Voltaic students would receive a fair share of the scholarships which France had assigned to colonial students.[19]

These gestures did not dampen the ardor of the Mossi chiefs for the reintegration of the Upper Volta. In April 1947, when French President Auriol, touring the territories to observe the operation of the new political institutions, visited the Upper Volta, the Yatenga Naba, the Tenkodogo Naba, and the head ruler of Fada-N'Gourma met the presidential party at Ouagadougou and pressed their claim for separate territorial status. The French reportedly welcomed this petition because it gave them an opportunity to clip the wings of Houphouët-Boigny, as well as to ensure the aid of the chiefs in procuring adequate manpower for a projected extension of the Abidjan–Bobo-Dioulasso railroad to Ouagadougou. The problem was to convince the National Assembly in Paris that the reunification of the Upper Volta was in the best interests of all concerned.

The French government set up a Parliamentary Commission and sent its chairman, Jean Jacques Duglas, to Ouagadougou and other Voltaic re-

chief became ridiculously smaller when distributed among the producers; gone the tolls along the roads. Henceforth, all such services will be duly and individually compensated.

Even in the most remote and least accessible villages, people speak of liberty. The old women who go to the pools for water sit down for a moment near their jars in order to talk about it. Even bush fires spread less rapidly than this news.[27]

Very few Mossi in the rural areas were qualified to vote in the first post-war elections, and those who were qualified voted for the candidates preferred by the chiefs. However, as the franchise was progressively broadened after 1951, and many more Mossi and non-Mossi politicians traveled through the rural areas, the politicians favored by the chiefs found that they had to campaign to maintain their position. Both the chiefs and their politicians resented this. One visitor to the Upper Volta reports: "A highly educated Mossi of the Upper Volta told me, 'Citizenship has unsettled and ruined the people. Everyone has become his own master, and believes himself free to do whatever he wishes.'"[28] Opposition to the chiefs and their friends came from the Moslems, who supported their co-religionists for office, and from a growing group of young Mossi who resented the power of the chiefs. In 1955 one such group in Yatenga, composed of mission-educated youths, war veterans, and former workers, broke away from the Union Voltaïque and formed the Mouvement Démocratique Voltaïque (MDV) under the joint leadership of Gérard Ouédraogo and Michel Dorange, a Frenchman, who had been a captain in the colonial army. The partisans of the MDV often came into violent conflict with the supporters of the chiefs, but the organization itself was not banned by the administration, because its members included many veterans, and because Dorange was one of its leaders.

The appearance of the anti-chief MDV was symptomatic of the problems which the Mossi chiefs were to encounter as the people became free to elect their own representatives. For one thing, the people could now censure their chiefs by voting for their opponents, who appealed to them in terms of release from traditional prestations. But more important, even those Mossi politicians who were still friendly to the chiefs and depended on their support for election were becoming increasingly autonomous. The chiefs were operating in one power structure, the politicians in another and more important one. In Dakar, in Paris, and in the Palace of Versailles (where the Assembly of the French Union met) Mossi politicians dealt not only with local African problems but with problems the chiefs knew nothing about. As the politicians grew skillful at the game of metropolitan

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The Mossi chiefs indeed understand today that a tradition, no matter how respected, is not immutable. It is susceptible to change and evolution; it will evolve.

In all truth, and with due deference to those who systematically denigrate everything connected with them, the chiefs have borne positive witness to the characteristic spirit of this country, and it is as unfair as it is stupid to deny the important role they have played in certain cases in the cause of tranquility and peace.

As the natural spokesmen for their people, they have been, in many instances, the first to pay a heavy price for the common cause. Without them, demagoguery would have plunged the country into irreparable decadence.

. . .

The demands of the traditional chiefs are justified and deserve to be heeded, because, in the face of the inertia of the Government and the rapid development of events, it is to be feared that the chiefs, although disposed by nature to be patient and to wait quietly, might run rather than walk in the days to come.[53]

In December 1956, the Mossi chiefs, supported by the other traditional chiefs in French West Africa, convoked a Congress of Chiefs at Dakar. This Congress approved a constitution for an organization called the Federal Union of the Syndicates of the Traditional Chiefs, and adopted a proposal on the need for a statute governing the status and material well-being of the chiefs. The Congress did underline the apolitical character of the chieftainship, but asked that the chiefs be given some recognition in the new structures being created by the loi-cadre.

On the local level, the Mossi chiefs convoked a Syndicate of the Traditional Chiefs of the Upper Volta at Tenkodogo a month later. Its president, Etienne Congo, brother of Mogho Naba Sagha II of Ouagadougou, declared:

At this time, when vast changes are under way, it would be inconceivable for us, the traditional chiefs, not to take an active part in the new developments, of whose urgent and precarious nature we are fully aware.

Our position is clear: we are not opposed in any way to this evolution.

As for statutory matters, I wish to express our concern over the fact that at the very moment when the loi-cadre is turning an important page in the history of Africa, our group has been left out.[54]

The Mossi chiefs had indeed been abandoned by the French administration. Although they continued to receive the support of some politicians, it soon became clear that the latter were mainly interested in maneuvering for power under the loi-cadre and in uniting their parties to this end. Conombo, the leader of the PSEMA, was induced by his supporters and by a

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number of young educated Mossi to merge his party with the PDV-RDA in the hope of gaining a foothold in the Bobo-Dioulasso area and of uniting the Mossi and non-Mossi of the Upper Volta. The two parties did merge in September 1956, becoming the Parti Démocratique Unifié (PDU). The PDU's manifesto roundly condemned the "artificial division of the territory into East and West Volta" and the "classification of the population as Mossi and non-Mossi," and urged all Voltaics to join the new party. In addition, it declared that the Mossi chiefs merited some status in the territory because they had preserved their "political entity throughout African history."[88] The PDU went so far as to make the Mogho Naba its honorary president, and to speculate that he might be made the Governor of an autonomous or independent Upper Volta.

Nevertheless, the merger was to be a greater victory for the opponents of the Mossi chiefs than for their allies in the PSEMA. For one thing, many of the anti-chief Mossi intellectuals now joined the PDU, bringing with them their modernistic views. For another, since former RDA members were running for office in the Upper Volta under the banner of the PDU, the local chiefs had to give up their opposition to these candidates, and the French administration did likewise. This hands-off policy gave all the candidates, even those who were basically hostile to the chiefs, a better chance of being elected.

The PDU won a slight over-all majority and a large Ouagadougou majority in the Upper Volta elections for the Territorial Assembly and the Government Council in March 1957. However, the anti-chief MDV carried the Ouahigouya (Yatenga) area, and an Indépendant candidate, Maurice Yaméogo, defeated a supporter of the Mossi chiefs, Henri Guissou, in the Koudougou area. Of great importance was the election of Ouezzain Coulibaly, one of the early non-Mossi Voltaic supporters of Houphouët-Boigny, who had returned to the Upper Volta after the merger of the PSEMA and the PDV-RDA. Coulibaly was elected on the PDU ticket as a representative for Banfora, a district in the western region.[89]

Unfortunately for the Mossi chiefs, the RDA emerged from the March elections as the strongest party in all the former French West African territories. Because of this, most of the politicians in the Upper Volta sought to establish a modus vivendi with Houphouët-Boigny, the Party's recognized leader. Most of them went to visit him at Yamoussokro, his home in the Ivory Coast, and out of these meetings there emerged a realignment of the MDV and the PDV-RDA wing of the PDU at the expense of Conombo and the PSEMA group. This created a new majority in the Upper Volta, and Coulibaly, an old ally of Houphouët-Boigny long suspected by the

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Mossi chiefs of being a modernist, was elected as the first Vice-President of the new government. Not only was the Mogho Naba deprived of the opportunity to become the African head of the Upper Volta, but such stalwart supporters of the chiefs as Conombo and Bouda were left out of the government. Thus, after twelve years of opposition to Houphouët-Boigny, Mogho Naba Sagha and his chiefs were finally defeated. Their defeat was made even more ignominious by the elevation of a non-Mossi commoner to a position of dominance over the Mossi chiefs.[37]

Having lost out in the Upper Volta, the Mossi chiefs had no spokesman when the new Vice-Presidents of the Government Councils of the French West African territories and the European Presidents of these territories met at Dakar to discuss the problems of the truncated French West Africa Federation. No one mentioned the problem of the position of the traditional chiefs. As far as the politicians were concerned, the issue of the chief on the inter-territorial level was dead. It had relevance only in those territories where the chiefs retained some influence.

In an effort to consolidate their hold on the Upper Volta, the PDV-RDA members in the PDU met in September 1957 and sought to convert the PDU into a territorial subsection of the RDA. This move was resisted by the supporters of the chiefs within the PDU, especially by Conombo, who as leader of the PSEMA, an important faction within the PDU, had been completely eclipsed by Coulibaly and the PDV. Conombo resigned from the PDU and announced his intention to rebuild the PSEMA with the support of the Mossi chiefs. On November 12, however, before his plans could be put into action, Mogho Naba Sagha II died in Ouagadougou and political activities in the Upper Volta came to a standstill. A period of national mourning was proclaimed, and politicians from all parties gathered to pay their last respects and to eulogize the monarch.

Sagha's death, like that of all Mossi princes, was ascribed to foul means, although it was clear that he had succumbed to uremia. The people reacted to the interregnum by looting, and the shopkeepers in Ouagadougou and surrounding areas were compelled to close their establishments. "The people of Ouagadougou ran to Saba, but the merchants there were quite diligent, and needed no police force to protect them."[38] It was reported that those wives of the deceased ruler who were not at the palace at the time of his death took off the brass anklets denoting their royal status and became free women. If this actually happened, it was an unprecedented occurrence.

When the Mossi traditional electoral college convened to choose a new Mogho Naba, it reportedly considered the candidacy of both Moussa Con-

For all its occasional eloquence, the new Mogho Naba's speech was clearly self-serving; moreover, the French officials to whom it was addressed were withdrawing from the territory, and the young Mossi elite had other ideas about the distribution of power. It is no wonder, then, that most of the politicians listened to his speech in respectful silence and then "calmly went ahead with their tasks," confident, it seems, in their new status as the elected representatives of the people.[40]

The new Mogho Naba was faced with a political situation in which he could play only a limited role. His strength now lay exclusively among the more conservative elements of the newly enfranchised rural masses. The political representative of this group was Conombo, who in November 1957 went ahead with his plans to rebuild the PSEMA. In December Conombo saw a chance to embarrass and perhaps defeat the Coulibaly Government when the Territorial Assembly decided to vote on the budget of the Upper Volta; he and his followers withheld their vote of confidence in the Government and tried to force it to resign. But the conditions under which the members of the Territorial Assembly could force a government to resign were not clearly defined by the loi-cadre. The various parliamentary groups appealed in vain to Paris and to Houphouët-Boigny to resolve the problem. Coulibaly broke the impasse by forming a new coalition and giving Maurice Yaméogo, an Indépendant candidate who had been a member of the RDA and later of the MDV but had switched back to the RDA, the important portfolio of Minister of the Interior. Finally, the Assembly, which had been adjourned, reconvened in April 1958 and confirmed Coulibaly in power. In a speech to the Assembly, Coulibaly declared: "It is my imperative task to tell you that each one of you is faced today with a decisive choice. You must choose either a pooling of efforts and good will in the interests of the country, or the pursuit of personal quarrels and partisan rivalries that will undermine the public welfare."[41]

The Mogho Naba and his political allies suffered yet another defeat with the Assembly's approval of the Coulibaly Government. However, Kougri had other strings to his bow. In June 1958, when de Gaulle returned to power, Kougri sought to gain the General's favor, and to raise his own status, by pledging his support and that of the Mossi chiefs. This astute political move infuriated many Voltaics, Mossi and non-Mossi, politicians and non-politicians. Amadou Tamboura, a member of the MDV, replied to the Mogho Naba in the newspaper *Paris-Dakar*. Under the headline, "The Message of the Mogho Naba to General de Gaulle Commits Only Himself," he wrote: